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Executive Board
Annual session 1996
17-21 June 1996
Item 2 of the provisional agenda

FOR ACTION

# ANNOTATED PROVISIONAL AGENDA AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK

For the 1996 annual session of the Executive Board
to be held at United Nations Headquarters
from 17 to 21 June 1996

SUMMARY

The present document contains the annotated provisional agenda for the 1996 annual session of the Executive Board. The annex provides the proposed timetable and organization of work for the session.

96-12229

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PROVISIONAL AGENDA*

Item 1: Opening statements by the President of the Board and the Executive Director

Item 2: Adoption of the provisional agenda and timetable and organization of work

Item 3: Report of the Executive Director

Item 4: Progress report on follow-up to the World Summit for Children

Item 5: Medium-term plan for the period 1996-1999

Item 6: Review of UNICEF policies and strategies on child protection

Item 7: Conceptual framework for UNICEF emergency interventions

Item 8: Greeting Card and related Operations (GCO):

(a) GCO work plan and proposed budget for 1996

(b) GCO financial report and accounts for the year ended 30 April 1995

Item 9: Progress report on the Management Excellence Programme

Item 10: Harmonization of budget presentations**

Item 11: Draft report of the Secretary-General on enhancing internal oversight mechanisms in operational funds and programmes**

Item 12: Update on the audit of the Kenya country office**

Item 13: Reports on the meetings of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization/UNICEF Joint Committee on Education and the UNICEF/World Health Organization Joint Committee on Health Policy

Item 14: Report of the Working Group on Documentation

Item 15: Other matters

Item 16: Concluding remarks by the Executive Director and the President of the Board

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* The fiftieth anniversary of UNICEF will be observed by the Board on the afternoon of Wednesday, 19 June. This is reflected in the timetable and organization of work.

** Oral report.

ANNOTATED PROVISIONAL AGENDA

1. Opening statements by the President of the Board and the Executive Director

Introductory statements will be made by the President of the Executive Board and the Executive Director.

2. Adoption of the provisional agenda and timetable and organization of work
[FOR ACTION]

The provisional agenda has been structured in accordance with relevant Executive Board decisions, in particular the 1996 programme of work adopted by the Board at its third regular session in September 1995 (E/ICEF/1995/9/Rev.1, decision 1995/38). The timetable and organization of work are provided in the annex.

The Bureau was consulted on the provisional agenda and timetable (CF/EB/1996/039). Thereafter, it was shared with Board members.

Draft decisions will be adopted as the discussion of each agenda item is concluded. However, if required, time will be set aside for Board members to consult informally on all outstanding draft decisions.

When consideration of an agenda item concludes ahead of the allocated time, the next item on the agenda will be taken up for consideration and the timetable adjusted accordingly.

3. Report of the Executive Director
[FOR INFORMATION - E/ICEF/1996/10 (Part I)]

The "Report of the Executive Director" is prepared in the context of decision 1995/5 (E/ICEF/1995/9/Rev.1) taken at the first regular session of 1995 and the 1996 programme of work. Subjects have been consolidated and the report has been streamlined. Due to the timing of the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council, part II of the report, "Annual report to the Economic and Social Council", was submitted to the Board at its second regular session in April 1996.

This report provides an overview of developments in UNICEF in 1995 in the following areas: programmes; working with partners and allies; human resources management; management excellence; and finance and administration.

4. Progress report on follow-up to the World Summit for Children
[FOR ACTION - E/ICEF/1996/15]

This report responds to Executive Board decisions 1994/A/2 (E/ICEF/1913/Rev.1) and 1995/14 (E/ICEF/1995/9/Rev.1) concerning a mid-decade review of progress towards implementation of the commitments of the Declaration and Plan of Action of the World Summit for Children.

In his report to the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly on follow-up to the World Summit for Children, the Secretary-General suggested that the sixth anniversary of the World Summit, 30 September, would appear to be an

appropriate time to announce the status of progress of implementation of the World Summit Declaration and Plan of Action at mid-decade (the end of 1995) and for a more complete assessment of achievements with regard to the mid-decade goals. In addition, he has asked UNICEF, as the lead agency for children, to prepare his report to the General Assembly, in close consultation with the specialized agencies and other organs of the United Nations.

This progress report is a preview of the Secretary-General's report. However, since the results of the mid-decade reviews were not available at the time of the preparation of the present report, the Executive Director will mention highlights in her introduction of the report to the Executive Board. The Executive Board may wish to consider and adopt the draft decision contained in the progress report.

5. Medium-term plan for the period 1996-1999

[FOR ACTION - E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.10]

This report responds to Executive Board decision 1994/A/1 (E/ICEF/1994/13/Rev.1) in that it is far briefer and more forward-looking than in the past, confining itself to strategic directions. It is a two-year rolling plan within a four-year horizon. Major areas covered in the report include the UNICEF Mission Statement; the changing environment; how the UNICEF of the future should look and work; programme strategies and actions; human resources management; and the financial plan. The Executive Board may wish to take note of the medium-term plan as a flexible framework for supporting UNICEF programmes and approve the financial plan for the period 1996-1999.

6. Review of UNICEF policies and strategies on child protection

[FOR ACTION - E/ICEF/1996/14]

This review underscores the experience during 10 years of application of the UNICEF policy on children in especially difficult circumstances adopted by the Executive Board in 1986 (E/ICEF/1986/12, decision 1986/12). It addresses the question of the UNICEF response to circumstances and conditions that cause gross violations of the rights of children, subjecting them to serious risks and hazards. The review moves beyond the idea of "children in especially difficult circumstances" as describing certain categories of children in need of additional services to the idea of "especially difficult circumstances" and the need of "special protection measures" as an important perspective for designing UNICEF programmes of cooperation. The Executive Board may wish to consider and adopt the draft decision contained in the report.

7. Conceptual framework for UNICEF emergency interventions

[FOR ACTION - E/ICEF/1996/16]

As requested by the Executive Board in its decision 1996/2 (E/ICEF/1996/12 (Part I)) on the mission and strategies of UNICEF emergency services, adopted at its first regular session in January 1996, this report presents a conceptual framework, including guiding principles and methodologies, for UNICEF emergency interventions. The Executive Board may wish to take note of the report and provide guidance to the secretariat, as necessary.

8. Greeting Card and related Operations (GCO)

(a) GCO work plan and proposed budget for 1996
[FOR ACTION - E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.11]

The Executive Board will have before it the GCO work plan and proposed budget for the 1996 season (fiscal year 1 May 1996 to 30 April 1997). The Board may wish to consider and approve the draft decisions relating to the GCO budget for the 1996/1997 fiscal year.

As decided by the Board at its first regular session in January 1996 (E/ICEF/1996/12 (Part I), decision 1996/6), consideration of all issues relating to the follow-up exercise to the management review of GCO, including those identified in decisions 1995/20 and 1995/25 (E/ICEF/1995/9/Rev.1), has been deferred to the third regular session in September 1996.

(b) GCO financial report and accounts for the year ended 30 April 1995
[FOR INFORMATION - E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.12]

The Board will have before it for review the financial report for the 1994 season, 1 May 1994-30 April 1995.

9. Progress report on the Management Excellence Programme
[FOR INFORMATION - E/ICEF/1996/AB/L.9]

This report is submitted to the Executive Board in response to its decision 1995/25 in which the secretariat was requested to provide the Board with regular updates on progress made in the follow-up to the management review exercise.

10. Harmonization of budget presentations

In accordance with Executive Board decision 1995/37 (E/ICEF/1995/9/Rev.1) on the harmonization of budget presentations, adopted at its third regular session in September 1995, the secretariat will present an oral progress report on steps needed for further harmonization, in consultation with the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Populaton Fund. Executive Board decision 1996/16 (E/ICEF/1996/12 (Part II)), adopted at the second regular session in April 1996, is also relevant in this context.

11. Draft report of the Secretary-General on enhancing internal oversight mechanisms in operational funds and programmes

At its second regular session in April 1996, the Executive Board had before it the draft report of the Secretary-General on enhancing the internal oversight mechanisms in operational funds and programmes (E/ICEF/1996/CRP.10). The Board decided to include this item on the agenda of the present session to provide an opportunity for those delegations which were unable to provide their comments at the April session.

In response to a request for a report describing the present capacity of UNICEF in internal audit and oversight, the Executive Director will present an oral report in this regard at the present session.

12. Update on the audit of the Kenya country office

Based on Executive Board decision 1995/27 (E/ICEF/1995/9/Rev.1), adopted at the third regular session in September 1995, the Executive Director will present a report on the audit of the Kenya country office under this agenda item. This will be presented orally.

13. Reports on the meetings of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization/UNICEF Joint Committee on Education and the UNICEF/World Health Organization Joint Committee on Health Policy

[FOR ACTION - E/ICEF/1996/P/L.63 AND E/ICEF/1996/P/L.64]

Under this agenda item, the Executive Board will have the following for review: (a) the report of the fifth meeting of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)/UNICEF Joint Committee on Education, held at UNESCO Headquarters in Paris on 6 and 7 May 1996; and (b) the report of the special session of the UNICEF/World Health Organization (WHO) Joint Committee on Health Policy, held at WHO Headquarters in Geneva on 15 and 16 May 1996.

As requested by the Executive Board at its first regular session of 1995 (E/ICEF/1995/9/Rev.1, decision 1995/4), the President of the Board will present the reports of the two joint committees to the Board, outlining the issues raised, the recommendations made and their context, and the future implications of the recommendations (E/ICEF/1996/CRP.21). The Executive Board may wish to take note of the reports of the joint committees "as guidelines for programming and for coordination and cooperation" between UNICEF and the two specialized agencies (E/ICEF/1994/13/Rev.1, decisions 1994/R.2/2 and 1994/R.2/3).

14. Report of the Working Group on Documentation

[FOR INFORMATION - E/ICEF/1996/17]

Prepared in response to Executive Board decision 1996/5 (E/ICEF/1996/12 (Part I)) on documentation, adopted at its first regular session in January 1996, this interim report provides an update on the progress made by the Working Group on this issue.

15. Other matters

The Board may consider discussing any other issues that it finds timely and appropriate under this agenda item.

16. Concluding remarks by the Executive Director and the President of the Board

The Executive Director and the President will make concluding remarks, followed by the closure of the session.

Annex

PROPOSED TIMETABLE AND ORGANIZATION OF WORK FOR THE 1996 ANNUAL SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD, 17-21 JUNE*

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| **MONDAY, 17 JUNE** | a.m./ p.m. | Item 1 | Opening statements by the President of the Board and the Executive Director |
| | | Item 2 | Adoption of the provisional agenda and timetable and organization of work |
| | | Item 3 | Report of the Executive Director |
| | | Item 4 | Progress report on follow-up to the World Summit for Children |
| **TUESDAY, 18 JUNE** | a.m./ p.m. | Item 5 | Medium-term plan for the period 1996-1999 |
| | | Item 6 | Review of UNICEF policies and strategies on child protection |
| **WEDNESDAY, 19 JUNE** | a.m. | Item 6 (cont'd) | Review of UNICEF policies and strategies on child protection (continued) |
| | | Item 7 | Conceptual framework for UNICEF emergency interventions |
| | p.m. | Item 8 | Greeting Card and related Operations (GCO): introduction of reports |
| | | | Observance of the fiftieth anniversary of UNICEF |
| **THURSDAY, 20 JUNE** | a.m./ p.m. | Item 8 (cont'd) | Greeting Card and related Operations (GCO) (continued): |
| | | | (a) GCO work plan and proposed budget for 1996 |
| | | | (b) GCO financial report and accounts for the year ended 30 April 1995 |
| | | Item 9 | Progress report on the Management Excellence Programme |
| | | Item 10 | Harmonization of budget presentations** |
| | | Item 11 | Draft report of the Secretary-General on enhancing internal oversight mechanisms in operational funds and programmes** |
| | | Item 12 | Update on the audit of the Kenya country office** |
| **FRIDAY, 21 JUNE** | a.m./ p.m. | Item 13 | Reports on the meetings of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization/UNICEF Joint Committee on Education and the UNICEF/World Health Organization Joint Committee on Health Policy |
| | | Item 14 | Report of the Working Group on Documentation |
| | | Item 15 | Other matters |
| | | Item 16 | Concluding remarks by the Executive Director and the President of the Board |

* When consideration of an agenda item concludes ahead of the allocated time, the next item on the agenda will be taken up for consideration and the timetable adjusted accordingly.

** Oral report.

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Executive Board
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Item 6 of the provisional agenda*

FOR ACTION

# A REVIEW OF UNICEF POLICIES AND STRATEGIES ON CHILD PROTECTION

SUMMARY

The present review begins with an executive summary and a brief introduction. Chapter I describes the background of UNICEF concern with child protection, while chapter II reviews UNICEF experience during the 10 years of application of its 1986 policy on behalf of children in especially difficult circumstances. An analysis of the causes and the identification of circumstances requiring special protection measures are contained in chapter III. Chapter IV addresses the issues of programming and advocacy for special child protection, including the situation analysis, programme goals and objectives, programme strategies, programming and advocacy at the country level, supportive actions at regional and global levels, and monitoring and evaluation. The organizational implications for UNICEF are detailed in chapter V. A recommendation for Executive Board approval is contained in chapter VI. A description of the work of the Committee on the Rights of the Child is found in the annex to the present review.

* E/ICEF/1996/13.

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the 10 years since the UNICEF Executive Board established an organizational policy on behalf of children in especially difficult circumstances (CEDC) (see E/ICEF/1986/L.3 and E/ICEF/1986/12, decision 1986/12), world-wide awareness of problems such as child exploitation, abuse and abandonment has grown, as apparently has the number of children affected. Many such problems are the outcome of failed or inequitable development processes, while others are caused by the organized violence that has overtaken certain countries and regions.

Simultaneously, the movement on behalf of child rights - with which UNICEF became identified in the late 1980s - achieved the adoption and near universal ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The UNICEF Mission Statement (E/ICEF/1996/12 (Part I), decision 1996/1) affirms that its work on behalf of children should be guided by the principles and standards established by the Convention for the overall protection of childhood.

The present policy review addresses the question of the UNICEF response to circumstances and conditions that cause gross violations of the rights of children, subjecting them to serious risks and hazards. The review moves beyond the idea of "children in especially difficult circumstances" as describing certain categories of children in need of additional services to the idea of "especially difficult circumstances" and the need of "special protection measures" as an important perspective for designing UNICEF programmes of cooperation. The broad, often overlapping, categories of circumstances that put children in special disadvantage include: (a) disabling child labour; (b) war and other forms of organized violence; (c) sexual abuse and exploitation of children; (d) childhood disabilities; (e) loss of family and primary caregivers; and (f) deficient laws and juvenile justice system.

The review recognizes that gross violations of children's rights often correlate with typical poverty indicators such as low family income, high child morbidity and illiteracy, but frequently the effects of the standard poverty indicators are exacerbated by other calamities to create special hazards for children. It adopts the concept of "special protection measures", formulated by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, to describe the actions required to redress special vulnerabilities of children so as to enable them to enjoy all of their rights.

The present review proposes measures for mainstreaming sectoral programmes so that they reach and serve children who are at special disadvantage. It also suggests that specific targeted programme activities and advocacy measures be designed and implemented as needed. Adapting various possible programme measures into a coherent programme of cooperation in a country setting will depend on the assessment of problems and needs, the comparative advantage of UNICEF in the country, and the actions of other partners and allies. The review underscores the experience during 10 years of application of the 1986 CEDC policy. It emphasizes the importance of learning and exploring, in cooperation with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental partners, to find effective ways of protecting children at special disadvantage.

## INTRODUCTION

1. Since its adoption by the United Nations General Assembly in 1989, the Convention on the Rights of the Child has passed into international law and has been ratified by 187 States Parties. During that period, the Convention has become an increasingly important source of guidance for UNICEF work. The principal early role of UNICEF in relation to the Convention was to disseminate information concerning its provisions and to promote its ratification. But the near-universal acceptance of this set of minimum standards concerning childhood led UNICEF to consider its role in the implementation of the Convention, an evolution officially begun with a report on the "Role of UNICEF in the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child" (E/ICEF/1991/L.7) submitted to the Executive Board at its 1991 regular session. The report called for the development of programmes of cooperation with Governments aimed at putting the provisions of the Convention into effect.

2. The new rights perspective is recognized in the UNICEF Mission Statement, which was adopted on 22 January 1996 by the Executive Board at its first regular session (E/ICEF/1996/12 (Part I), decision 1996/1). The statement describes UNICEF as "guided by the Convention on the Rights of the Child", with policies and programmes that embed the principles of the Convention throughout. In fact, while the Mission Statement represents the first formal expression of the commitment of UNICEF to programming and policy-making based on children's rights, the evolution has been under way informally within UNICEF for some years. The present review of UNICEF policies and strategies is the first to be presented to the Executive Board since the adoption of the Mission Statement. It therefore opens a new era in terms of translating into active UNICEF policy these new guiding principles.

3. All the implications of approaching UNICEF work from the perspective of children's rights have yet to be fully absorbed and given institutional expression. Factors to be considered and incorporated as the new rights-based approach of UNICEF evolves include: (a) the extension of UNICEF concern to children everywhere; (b) the broadening of focus from infants and young children to those ranging up to 18 years, the age defined by the Convention as the outer limit of childhood; and (c) the application, in any analysis or action, of the Convention's principles - non-discrimination, "the best interests of the child", and children's participation in the decisions and actions that affect them.

4. The purpose of the Convention can be described as the overall protection of childhood. Its principles and articles cover all children at all times; there is no hierarchy of provisions whereby the right to education, for example, transcends the right to protection from sexual exploitation, or vice versa. However, the Convention recognizes that there are varying degrees of risk and hazards for children. It guarantees all children protection against physical, psychological or moral injury in the form of abuse, exploitation, abandonment or neglect. Certain articles of the Convention also cover the child's rights to special protection in the context of war or forced migration, in situations where the child is in conflict with the law and in cases of disability. Provisions in Articles 19-23 and 32-40 specifically state that children are "to be protected from" abuses, including economic and sexual exploitation or illegal adoption; and that they are "to be provided with" services such as

rehabilitative care from the effects of torture, abuse or armed conflict, and special entitlements when they are without families or when their families fail in their responsibilities. The Committee on the Rights of the Child, the monitoring body for the implementation of the Convention, has developed the concept of "special protection measures" as a guide for action in these areas by States Parties.

5. The present review is concerned specifically with actions to protect children from the conditions or risks of gross exploitation, abuse, abandonment and other circumstances that place children at special disadvantage - situations termed "especially difficult circumstances". The underlying premise of work in this area is that protecting children from circumstances of extreme hazard and high risk, and enabling them to enjoy all of their rights, require special efforts and additional measures beyond general programmes and policies for meeting the needs and fulfilling the rights of all children.

## I. BACKGROUND OF UNICEF CONCERN WITH CHILD PROTECTION

6. During the International Year of the Child (IYC) in 1979, a climate of increased awareness and concern about vulnerable children evolved, mainly at the instigation of child-focused non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Certain especially difficult circumstances - exploitation, abuse, prostitution and life on the streets - were lifted, for the first time, out of a philanthropic backwater and placed on the public policy agenda. Although many Governments in industrialized as well as developing countries had previously been unwilling to admit that such problems existed, with IYC they began to acknowledge the problems and to seek help in taking the necessary steps to resolve them.

7. The first category of special disadvantage to be addressed within the context of UNICEF policy development was childhood disability in 1980 (see "Childhood disability: its prevention and rehabilitation - note and recommendations of the Executive Director" (E/ICEF/L.1411)). Also around 1980, work began in the Latin American and Caribbean region to support NGOs working with street children. In 1984, the first "Days of Tranquillity" took place in war-torn El Salvador, establishing the concept that children should be seen as zones of peace, at least during a period long enough to carry out an immunization campaign. Also in 1984, the UNICEF Executive Board requested that the issue of children in situations of special disadvantage be examined more closely. This led to the adoption of the UNICEF policy for children in especially difficult circumstances in 1986 (E/ICEF/1986/L.3 and E/ICEF/1986/12, decision 1986/12).

8. The 1986 policy review paper analysed the situation of children in especially difficult circumstances under three headings: children in armed conflict; working and street children; and child victims of abuse and neglect. It also laid down principles to cover programming for children in especially difficult circumstances and made recommendations for UNICEF activities at country and global levels. The principles included ensuring that programmes (a) were implemented in close cooperation with a variety of partners, especially in the NGO and private sectors; (b) respect the integrated physical, mental, emotional, spiritual and social development of the child; (c) reinforce family

and community solidarity and initiative; and (d) should aim to ensure that existing services, such as health, education and social services, extend to reach children in especially difficult circumstances. The recommendations dealt with the needs for situation analyses, advocacy, the dissemination of information, capacity-building, monitoring and evaluation, and other regular features of UNICEF programme activities. Much of the policy is still valid.

9. With increased awareness of childhood vulnerability came the initiative to draft a Convention on the Rights of the Child. Work on the draft proceeded under the guidance of the United Nations Commission for Human Rights, driven in large part by certain Governments and NGOs. Beginning in 1986, UNICEF also threw its weight behind the Convention drafting process (see E/ICEF/1986/12, decision 1986/21). The adoption of the Convention in 1989 and its swift passage into international law are landmarks in the ascendance of the children's cause. Together with the Declaration and Plan of Action of the 1990 World Summit for Children, the Convention established an agenda for children for that decade and beyond.

10. Since 1991, UNICEF has supported the work of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (see the annex) by providing technical assistance to States Parties engaged in the reporting process. UNICEF also has collaborated with other United Nations agencies, including the International Labour Organisation (ILO), the World Health Organization (WHO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), to support additional initiatives on behalf of children, and has played a role in implementing various child-related United Nations resolutions. For instance, UNICEF is providing critical support to the comprehensive United Nations study on the situation of children affected by armed conflict.

11. The complementary roles of the World Summit for Children goals and the Convention were highlighted in the early 1990s after reflective and analytic work undertaken by the International Child Development Centre in Florence. At the same time, as public interest in children's issues grew in industrialized countries, National Committees for UNICEF increasingly became involved in the international dimensions of child protection issues, and they looked to the Convention as the framework for public debate in their own countries.

12. A review of UNICEF policies and strategies in child protection has become necessary at this time for several reasons. First, in the 10 years since the previous articulation of policy towards children in especially difficult circumstances, UNICEF has developed a better understanding of the issues and how to reach children in special disadvantage more effectively. Second, there has been an extraordinary rise in public awareness of and interest in these issues. Third, as public perceptions of the problems grow in developing and industrialized countries alike, the numbers of children affected appear to be growing as well. Fourth, an increasing number of Governments have stated their willingness to act with UNICEF cooperation to rectify the circumstances that place children at particular disadvantage. This trend is revealed by the States Party reporting process on implementation of the Convention, which is overseen by the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Finally, the formulation of a policy relating to the fulfilment of children's rights to protection will assist

UNICEF in developing a child rights approach to overall programming and advocacy at country and global levels. The review, therefore, is a contribution to evolving ideas and practice of UNICEF in this field.

## II. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CHILDREN IN ESPECIALLY DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES POLICY, 1986-1996

13. The 1986 policy paper and the resultant Programme Directive (CF/PD/PRO-1986-004) provided a starting point for formal UNICEF action in this field. The emphasis during the late 1980s and early 1990s was still placed primarily on child survival, health and, after 1990, education. Few human or technical resources were devoted to children in especially difficult circumstances at UNICEF headquarters. With some notable exceptions, where programmes were made possible through supplementary funds, resources also were generally scarce at regional and country levels. In most country programmes and regional offices, CEDC activities were regarded as a programmatic add-on.

14. Certain UNICEF country offices, including Brazil, Bolivia, Kenya, Mozambique and the Philippines, pioneered the integration of the principles of the Convention on the Rights of the Child into situation analyses and country programmes. The belief emerged that work on children's rights required something more systemic than merely the addition of children in especially difficult circumstances as a programme category or the promotion of the ratification of the Convention. Simultaneously, it was recognized that issues of children in especially difficult circumstances had implications more profound than had earlier been perceived. The circumstances that allowed gross violations of children's rights required more than additional services or increased advocacy. The numbers of children affected and the nature of their many predicaments often denoted generic and structural problems within society at large, and these had important implications for UNICEF programmes. Some valuable initiatives were undertaken by UNICEF at the country level, and from these, the following useful lessons have been learned:

(a) Lessons in situation analysis. In some countries, notably those in Latin America, UNICEF gained its first experience in the area of children in especially difficult circumstances from programmes for children on the streets. This early work led to the recognition that many basic assumptions were faulty, including the widely-held belief that a high proportion of street children are parentless or homeless. Methods for analysing the situation of other especially disadvantaged children were developed and published by the UNICEF Regional Programme for CEDC in Latin America and the Caribbean (e.g., No. 6, "Methodological Guide on Situation Analysis of Children in Especially Difficult Circumstances", 1988). The expanding knowledge of UNICEF soon led to the revelation that data were inadequate in almost every area, a revelation that reflects public and political sensitivities about children in especially difficult circumstances and concerning children and youth who were at odds with the law;

(b) Lessons in programming. The complexities surrounding issues of children in especially difficult circumstances require innovative approaches to programming. In Guatemala, India and the Philippines, for example, preventing

children from being expelled from their families onto the street required strengthening basic services. Programmes in health and education were combined with income generation for families in specific geographic areas and interventions for children, such as organized recreation. In conjunction with these preventive programmes for families, intensive outreach and street education programmes were implemented for those children already living on the street;

(c) Lessons in partnerships. Addressing circumstances that put children at disadvantage required a multi-pronged, multisectoral programme approach. Because the principal government sector involved - ministries of social welfare - could not solve such pervasive societal problems alone, new ways of working with NGOs and community-based organizations emerged. The judicial branches of Government, youth organizations, women's groups and others were identified and mobilized as partners. Building the capacities of organizations within civil society to help strengthen and support children's social structures - their families and schools - is the next crucial stage of programme and advocacy work in the area of child and adolescent protection;

(d) Lessons in advocacy. Many Governments are sensitive to publicity about such issues as child prostitution, child labour, sex trafficking or abusive practices in juvenile justice systems. However, it has been observed that creative tensions between Governments and the NGOs concerned with child rights may help to raise public awareness and influence public policies. Adopting global positions on specific rights violations is difficult since a measure that is appropriate in one context may be inappropriate in another. Care must be taken to avoid succumbing to pressure from the media, donors and activists to take public positions that are not grounded in the proper understanding of complex issues or well-researched information;

(e) Lessons in monitoring and evaluation. There are no universal indicators to measure the exposure of children in especially difficult circumstances to risks, nor to measure the impact of those risks on the child's development. Each specific situation requires an understanding of the interplay of different variables. In the absence of clear concepts and appropriate methods to establish reliable baseline data, quantifiable goals in the area of CEDC have not been determined. Work on the identification of appropriate indicators suggests that agreed criteria for risk analysis need to be developed based on broadly accepted minimal standards for assuring the well-being of children.

## III. ANALYSING CAUSES AND IDENTIFYING CIRCUMSTANCES REQUIRING SPECIAL PROTECTION MEASURES FOR CHILDREN

15. The growing phenomenon of circumstances that place children at special disadvantage has to be seen in part as a product of the development process gone awry. Many especially difficult circumstances derive from failed or inequitable development processes, or from processes disrupted by war or other calamities, including the advent of AIDS. Underlying causes include rapid urbanization; the social impact of the globalization of the economy; the "new poverty" generated both by the economic problems of the 1980s and their antidote - structural

adjustment; the application of market forces in social policy; and endemic conflicts associated with the end of the cold war. The social outcomes of these trends include widespread population dislocation; increased urban stress and urban squalor; family disintegration and fragmentation; increased numbers of female-headed households; the absorption of women and children into servile and unregulated employment; the disaffection and alienation of youth, especially in countries with stagnant economies; and an increase in the numbers of children without families.

16. The capacity of UNICEF to deal with systemic discrimination or the structural causes of depredation of children is limited. However, its effort to tackle the immediate and direct obstacles to children's well-being and the fulfilment of their rights has to be fully cognizant of the deeper causes. Efforts must be combined, as much as possible, with advocacy, policy dialogue and alliance-building in support of structural and attitudinal changes in society.

17. Gross violations of children's rights frequently correlate with typical poverty indicators, such as low family income, high morbidity and illiteracy. However, the essential point is that these are additional to the standard poverty indicators. It is the combination of both sets of circumstances - those requiring survival and development measures and those requiring special protection measures - that create "especially difficult circumstances" for children. Since the elaboration of the 1986 CEDC policy, there has been considerable debate about the categorization of children under this heading and whether this helped programming. The continuing use of the descriptor "CEDC" and the categorization of children into such groups provoke concern among many experienced activists and practitioners who contend that they can lead to labelling. To define children by the circumstances that have negatively affected them is to characterize them as deviant from social norms instead of recognizing that they are victims of socially deficient structures and policies. At the same time, labelling is said to be disliked by the children themselves because it reinforces negative social attitudes towards them.

18. However, it is difficult to avoid the categorization of children in especially difficult circumstances for purposes of coherent analysis and programmatic design. The categorization offered here is intended to help in the development of a perspective for assessing the different especially difficult circumstances in which children live and for arriving at appropriate programming to meet the needs for special protection measures.

19. The broad categorization proposed is one that highlights the circumstances imposed on children that put them at special disadvantage. The categorization is as follows:

(a) Circumstances of disabling child labour: economic exploitation and any other circumstance under which children perform paid or unpaid work that might be directly detrimental to their development, or that might prevent them from exercising their other rights, including the rights to education, health and leisure. Circumstances of abusive and disabling child labour are found in the formal and informal work sectors, including the streets, markets, households of employers or children's own households;

(b) Circumstances of warfare and other forms of organized or large-scale violence: any situation of conflict or violence that jeopardizes children's safety and/or their physical, intellectual, moral or spiritual development. Related circumstances include forced migration; involuntary separation from the family; and recruitment of children into the armed forces, the militia and guerilla cadres, or organized crime networks or gangs;

(c) Circumstances of sexual abuse or exploitation: any sexual commerce involving children or youth (including trafficking, prostitution and pornography), or any use of children or young people for the non-commercial sexual gratification of adults, including concubinage or child marriage;

(d) Circumstances of disability: circumstances that lead to mental, physical or sensory impairments acquired in any way during, before or after birth, including those resulting from childhood illnesses such as vaccine-preventable diseases; those stemming from malnutrition caused by iodine or vitamin A deficiencies; and those caused by accidents, warfare or violence;

(e) Circumstances of temporary or permanent loss of family and/or primary caregivers: conditions of need resulting from the death or incapacity of family members, or from family breakdown caused by divorce, incarceration of a parent or caregiver, or separation;

(f) Circumstances of deficient laws and/or abusive legal and judicial processes: any legal or judicial process that does not respect children's rights as set forth in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, including systems that arbitrarily or improperly deprive children of liberty, fail to protect children from maltreatment or abuse by legal systems and law enforcement agencies, deprive children of identity due to a deficient or non-existent vital registration system, or allow the sale and trafficking of children and adoption that is not in the best interest of the child.

20. This attempt to categorize "especially difficult circumstances" affecting children shows that it is difficult to do so definitively. Children often are subjected to many difficult circumstances at once. The parentless child, for example, may labour in prostitution while being deprived of education and health care. Furthermore, certain sets of difficult circumstances reinforce others. For example, some types of servile employment make children vulnerable to sexual exploitation. A comprehensive analysis of specific situations and circumstances at national and local levels is required as a basis for the design of appropriate strategies.

21. The difficulty of estimating the numbers of children affected by any particular circumstance is a reflection of the deficiencies in understanding what data are needed and devising the best methods to collect it. It is also difficult to arrive at exact numbers because the circumstances that place children in need of special protection are often illegal and, therefore, hidden from public view, making them hard to uncover and research.

22. Estimates now widely used are inadequate because they are rarely disaggregated by age, although the age of the child in question is a key determinant of degree of risk, vulnerability, exploitation and potential

long-term damage. Where data on child prostitution are concerned, for example, the numbers of pre-pubertal, early adolescent and late adolescent children involved are rarely specified, leading to distorted perceptions of the nature of the phenomenon. Similarly, minimum age of entry to the formal workplace may be overemphasized when reporting on economic exploitation. It may be more important to assess the relative hazards presented by certain occupations to children of different ages, or to measure opportunities such as primary schooling that are lost to children at different ages. Statistics are also rarely disaggregated by sex, a fact that prevents better understanding of abusive practices based on gender discrimination, including the disproportionate neglect or abandonment of girl children.

23. Global estimates of numbers of children affected in various categories of circumstances should be treated with caution, but they are useful as indicators of the magnitude of the problem. ILO estimates that there are between 100 million and 200 million children world-wide engaged in disabling child labour. The State of the World's Children 1996 report estimates that during the 1980s, 12 million children became homeless, 4 million-5 million disabled and 1 million orphaned as a result of wars. In The Progress of Nations 1995, UNICEF states that "the number of under-18s involved in prostitution probably exceeds 2 million". The global estimate of children with disabilities reported by WHO is 120 million-150 million. WHO also estimates that 3 million children world-wide have lost one or both parents due to AIDS. Despite the usefulness of those rough global estimates, it should be underscored that the design of programme policies and strategies should be based on national and local research and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative information.

## IV. PROGRAMMING AND ADVOCACY FOR SPECIAL CHILD PROTECTION

24. As explained in paragraph 5 above, the present review sets out policies and strategies for measures required to protect children who are subjected to or at risk of serious breaches of their rights. Children who require special protection measures are almost always at the same time deprived of most rights, such as health care, education, play and recreation, and participation. Special or additional measures to protect such children are best directed at enabling them to overcome the impediments imposed on them in order to gain access to the services and benefits to which all children are entitled.

25. Addressing those issues programmatically requires that the services provided for all children through regular programmes extend to reach children in especially difficult circumstances. At the same time, specifically targeted interventions for affected groups must be developed. There are parallels to be drawn with UNICEF policies towards women which involve both mainstreaming of the gender dimension within all programming and advocacy and affirmative action towards disadvantaged women and girls.

### A. Situation analysis

26. The development of a UNICEF country programme of cooperation begins with a situation analysis. In some countries, including those at war or in severe economic crises, a high proportion of children may be in "especially difficult

circumstances". In such settings, a situation analysis must start with the threat to children posed by the widespread disruption of family life and/or the collapse of state and societal safety nets. An example of such an approach can be found in the 1994 Uganda situation analysis. There, special attention was paid to the situation of adolescents since their rates of pregnancy, HIV/AIDS infection, school drop-out, unemployment and excessive alcohol consumption demonstrated their heightened vulnerability (see "Equity and Vulnerability: A Situation Analysis of Women, Adolescents and Children in Uganda", 1994). For countries in a severe state of civil turmoil or political breakdown, standard situation analysis methodology may be inappropriate, and especially difficult circumstances may become the context of analysis rather than one variable within it.

27. The situation of women, particularly where a high proportion are heading households, are in servile and low-paid occupations, are widowed or abandoned, or have low literacy rates, relates directly and indirectly to the prevalence of children in especially difficult circumstances. It is necessary to include women, children, youth and families as active participants in any situation analysis and to take into consideration not only their vulnerabilities, but also their resourcefulness.

28. Within each main sectoral area - health, nutrition, education, water and sanitation, as well as urban basic services and emergency operations - it will be necessary to consider whether the existing structures and methods of programme delivery also reach children in especially difficult circumstances. This means "poverty mapping" and assessing the state and capacities of local physical, administrative and human infrastructures.

29. An assessment of risks and opportunities has to be undertaken to identify the ways in which hazardous circumstances are affecting children. Risks are associated with age, sex, family ties, and physical, emotional and social hazards in a child's situation. Facts about the deprivation of participatory rights and discrimination on the basis of race, religion or disability need to be captured. The inability of the State to meet its obligations to protect children by ensuring services and safety nets constitutes a risk in itself. The opportunities include all factors that play a role in protecting children's rights. These include: national laws and policies, and the institutional capacity for enforcing laws and policies; existing service coverage and performance; available financial and human resources; and the attitudes and values in society at large. Indeed, many of those factors also can be seen as risks; the challenge in programming is to turn the risks into opportunities. Analysis should be undertaken to identify the partners that exist within Government and civil society and to determine which partnerships will have to be developed. Potential partners include legislators, the judiciary, members of the legal profession, the police, research institutions, the media, NGOs, community-based organizations, religious bodies, employers and trade unions. States Party reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child may provide a useful resource for this analysis.

30. Many of those issues are already being given more active consideration within sectoral approaches and by country offices. For example, the report on "UNICEF emergency operations" (E/ICEF/1995/5) includes several sections on

specific areas of special protection relating to children affected by emergencies, including unaccompanied children and those affected by internal displacement, land-mines or sanctions. The report on "UNICEF strategies in basic education" (E/ICEF/1995/16), submitted to the Executive Board at its annual session in May 1995, includes a brief section on "Education for children in especially difficult circumstances" (paragraphs 48-50). The change suggested here is that the especially difficult circumstance perspective be applied systematically and be fully integrated within all sectoral situation analyses.

### B. Programme goals and objectives

31. The difficulty of setting overall goals and specific objectives vis-à-vis children in need of special protection measures, as the discussion above shows, is due mainly to the lack of a conceptual framework and, consequently, to a shortage of adequate data. The difficulty is illustrated by the vagueness of the goal set by the World Summit for Children: "Protection of children in especially difficult circumstances, particularly in situations of armed conflict" (see the World Declaration and Plan of Action from the World Summit for Children). In order to expand the protection of children, the circumstances of special disadvantage that pertain in a given setting must first be defined. Programme goals and objectives in relation to special protection measures have to be derived from that setting. This process can only take place at the country level or, in some cases, at the district or municipal level.

32. The main criterion for setting goals for children in conditions of special disadvantage is to protect children and young people whose best interests and whose physical, intellectual, psychological and emotional security are threatened by others, through acts of commission and omission. The goals should be defined in a way that recognizes the primary obligation of parents and families towards children; the need and possibilities for the community and the civil society to participate and contribute; and state obligation to assist parents in meeting their own responsibilities as well as towards children who have been failed by their parents and families.

33. Objectives might include the elimination of the "difficult circumstances" (e.g., land-mine clearance or reform of laws that allow youngsters to be victimized or deprived of parental care) and the reduction of risks or hazards implicit in the "difficult circumstances" (e.g., reduction of drug and alcohol availability, making child care institutions more humane or reducing female illiteracy). Some objectives may focus on the children and young people in question rather than to the "difficult circumstances" themselves. These might include removal of all children from the "difficult circumstances" (e.g., from adult prisons, or from camps for boy soldiers); removal of all children under a certain age from the "difficult circumstances" (e.g., formal employment, or places of night-time entertainment); or reduction in the number of children at risk from the "difficult circumstances" (e.g., improvement of school retention rates, increases in the numbers of children with disabilities who attend school, or an increase in the legal minimum marriage age).

## C. Programme strategies

### Key principles underlying programme strategies

34. The overall programme experience of UNICEF, combined with the lessons learned from working with children in especially difficult circumstances (see paragraphs 13-14 above), indicate that six key principles must be incorporated into all programme strategies:

(a) Programmatic activity, review and development of policies, capacity-building, advocacy, and legislative and institutional reform on behalf of children in especially difficult circumstances are part of one continuum, and any strategy for protection must encompass all elements;

(b) The selection of programme components and the emphasis to be apportioned to each must derive from the situation analysis on the ground, and should not be prescriptive or predetermined at a different level of the organization;

(c) Children themselves should have an active role in designing and implementing programmes; children's resilience and resourcefulness should be valued, and their participation rights should be recognized;

(d) Programmatic activity should be cross-sectoral and multi-pronged;

(e) Partnerships at all levels, including international, national, subnational and community levels, are critical;

(f) All approaches adopted should be non-discriminatory and should respect "the best interests of the child".

35. As noted in paragraph 30 above, special protection measures have to be integrated into the mainstream of social programmes for children; in addition, specific activities for particular groups of children in special disadvantage are often necessary. Programming strategies also vary according to whether they are essentially preventive or rehabilitative. Four different levels of potential action can be considered: (a) prevention of especially difficult circumstances; (b) reduction of risk for the especially vulnerable and those with impairments, or "secondary prevention"; (c) compensatory support for groups of especially disadvantaged children whose situation is fluid or whose emergency circumstances can be relieved; and (d) rehabilitation for children with conditions of permanent disability. Preventive measures (subparagraphs (a) and (b) above) are usually approached through mainstreaming, whereas compensatory and rehabilitative measures require additional programme strategies. However, the separations between preventive and rehabilitative measures do not apply strictly, as is shown below.

### Mainstreaming

36. This strategy incorporates special protection concerns into existing programmatic frameworks. This requires adjusting or tailoring existing programmes to ensure that situations of special disadvantage are considered and

that programming includes groups of children in especially difficult circumstances, such as hard-to-reach children, child labourers or displaced children. The objectives of adjusting existing programmes are both preventive and rehabilitative. Many country programmes already have developed such strategies. For example, the area-based subregional programme for the Andean region in Bolivia targets geographical areas of extreme poverty and links them with community organizations that provide basic services and assist with income generation. The new challenge is to perform a systematic review of all sectors to ensure that consideration of especially difficult circumstances is fully incorporated into the process of programme development.

Targeted activities (preventive)

37. This strategy is specifically designed to prevent children at risk from becoming more vulnerable to special disadvantage. Urban basic services programmes designed to reach especially disadvantaged families, women, children and youth are preventive in both the primary (the main child population) and secondary (specially vulnerable) sense. The 35,000 schools run by the Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) to provide basic education for very poor children - especially girls in age-groups 8-10 and 11-16 years - represent a preventive approach (see Primary Education for All: Learning from the BRAC Experience, Academy for Educational Development, 1993). Another example is the Daughters Education Programme in Thailand, which aims to prevent girls from leaving their rural communities for entertainment industry jobs in urban areas.

Targeted activities (compensatory)

38. This strategy is intended to provide compensatory support for children in situations where the damage they have suffered may not be permanent. Many emergency-related programmes fall into this group, including those that provide psycho-social counselling for children affected by war, those that reunite children with their families following separation, and those that reintegrate child soldiers into society. Many urban basic services programmes contain rehabilitative components. For example, the urban basic services programme in the Philippines provides scholarships for out-of-school youth. Some compensatory support programmes also may include preventive elements. For example, the Education for Conflict Resolution programme in Sri Lankan schools promotes the idea of taking the "middle path" between extremes of aggression and passivity. In the context of disability, the appropriate strategies are the prevention of the descent from impairment to disability, and the creation of space within mainstream services for children with disabilities.

Targeted activities (rehabilitation)

39. Rehabilitation is needed for children in situations of permanent or near-permanent difficulty. Such circumstances would include disability, mental impairment from drugs and alcohol abuse, absence of families or effective ties, criminal behaviour and persistent conflicts with the law. Rehabilitation programmes designed to deal with such situations often require one-on-one casework by social welfare officers and religious or charitable workers. Strategic responses include humanizing institutions and alternative care

arrangements; locating foster parents for children orphaned by warfare and AIDS or abandoned by families or caregivers; and providing community-based services for the rehabilitation of children with disabilities.

40. When considering programme and advocacy actions in relation to specific categories of disadvantage, it is important to avoid prescriptive or predetermined approaches, either for the whole group, such as all child labourers, or for subgroups within the whole. In order to respond to the "best interests of the child", the appropriate approach is to develop a check-list of strategic options and select them on the basis of a careful diagnosis of the specific situation. Common responses include the expansion of educational opportunities; support services for families, especially income generation for women; legislative review; institutional reform; affirmative action on behalf of girls; and advocacy to change the attitudes of society and officials. Programme actions that may generally be appropriate for different categories of circumstances are illustrated in the figure below.

ILLUSTRATION OF PROGRAMME ACTIONS IN DIFFERENT CIRCUMSTANCES

In order to respond to the "best interests of the child", the appropriate approach is to develop a check-list of strategic options and select a combination of measures on the basis of careful analysis of the specific situation. The following are examples of preventive or remedial actions that can be taken in different circumstances:

(a) Child labour and other forms of economic exploitation of children: expanding schooling opportunities, either by "time off" to attend regular school or by providing schooling in the work place; providing support services, including income generation, to parents, especially mothers; promoting stricter law enforcement against traffickers and those who "bond" child labour; providing services for children working on the streets; raising the age of marriage; and changing cultural values and social norms tolerant of economic exploitation of children;

(b) Warfare and other forms of organized or large-scale violence: land-mine clearance and land-mine awareness programmes; reducing the prospects of internal migration and family separation, for example, by negotiating "corridors of peace"; providing training to teachers and social workers on trauma reduction; and developing prosthetics programmes for children with disabilities;

(c) Sexual abuse and exploitation of children: supporting legal measures and their enforcement; increasing the opportunities for girls to attend and stay in school; providing abused and exploited children with information about reducing their risks of HIV; developing parents' and communities' appreciation of the risks to their children of employment in certain occupations; enlisting the cooperation of employers in the entertainment industry to enforce the law on under-age employment in bars and night-clubs; setting up hot-lines for children suffering from abuse; and raising the age of marriage;

(d) Childhood disability: community-based prevention and rehabilitation; early detection of impairment and intervention to avoid progression to disability; design of facilities and amenities from which children with disabilities are not excluded; inclusion of children with disabilities in school; development of low-cost, durable prosthetics; and land-mine clearance and land-mine awareness programmes;

(e) Temporary or permanent loss of family or primary caregivers: promoting family- and community-based foster care; providing support services, including income generation, to families and communities providing such care; providing services such as health care and basic education specifically for children living on the street; reviewing adoption laws; setting up services for tracing families; and promoting the humanization of institutions;

(f) Deficiencies in law, its enforcement and judicial processes: supporting juvenile justice reforms; training of judicial and law enforcement officials; providing services for children working on the streets; promoting the humanization of institutions; and changing negative stereotypes about children leading lives in conflict with the law.

## D. Programming and advocacy at the country level

41. The range of programme strategies and actions described above has to be adapted as a coherent package in a country setting. As in other areas, the scope of UNICEF work in protecting children who are at special disadvantage will vary from country to country depending on the magnitude of the problems and needs, the UNICEF comparative advantage and the actions of other partners and allies. The following are particularly relevant considerations when designing the appropriate package of programme responses.

### Catalytic actions

42. UNICEF alone cannot make a significant difference for children in especially difficult circumstances. Its role is to bring about catalytic and strategic actions to support and strengthen the policies, plans and resolve of various national actors. Appropriate partners for this purpose will be government authorities at different levels, NGOs, research and training institutions, community groups, media, business and other external donors. The situations in which UNICEF is most able to take catalytic actions for children in especially difficult circumstances are those where the organization is already deeply engaged in such programme areas as urban basic services, emergency operations, basic education, adolescent health, women in development and AIDS prevention and control.

### Research

43. Research, and the development of tools for research, should be seen as parts of the necessary range of generic actions needed for improved child protection. Little is known about some categories of especially difficult circumstances; for example, research is needed to better understand the conditions of children working in agriculture and in such "invisible" occupations as domestic service, accommodation and catering. Childhood mental and multiple disabilities also are under-researched, and surprisingly little is known about the situations of children in institutions. Because it may be very difficult to research some circumstances unless the study is conducted within the context of existing programme activities, programming may be a prerequisite to certain types of serious research.

44. Children's downward progression from circumstances that place them at risk into more permanent conditions of special disadvantage also has received inadequate attention. For example, only anecdotal evidence exists about the links between child work on the street and the tendency towards criminal behaviours, or about "push" and "pull" factors leading teenagers in certain settings to become the victims of sexual exploitation.

45. Research institutes, statistical bureaux and NGOs are important partners which can fill gaps in the current knowledge of UNICEF about children at special disadvantage and their circumstances. National survey and census organizations can be supported to include child-centred data in their collection systems. It is very important that local organizations take the primary role in such research and that the children and young people involved participate. NGOs and community organizations should be supported and commissioned to undertake

surveys and studies that emphasize action-oriented research and participatory techniques.

Creation of non-governmental organization networks

46. Most front-line work with children in especially difficult circumstances is performed by NGOs and community-based organizations, some of which are very small. Such organizations are often created by caring individuals in response to conspicuous problems of human suffering, and they receive initial funding from charitable, religious or welfare bodies. UNICEF has developed many new ways of working with such NGOs and community-based organizations to help them pool skills, enhance their capacities and, in particular, to interact with government officials and municipal authorities. In Calcutta, UNICEF has helped NGOs working with street children to develop an inventory of their services, operate referral services and run joint activities. In Bangladesh, UNICEF helped set up a Child Rights Forum for joint NGO research and action on children in especially difficult circumstances. In Cambodia, a Child Welfare Group composed of local and international NGOs was promoted and now has functioning subcommittees on street children, homeless women, sexually-exploited and trafficked children, and child rights.

Promotion of self-expression among children and youth

47. Within the networks and the joint efforts already described, UNICEF can support activities that permit children and youth to articulate their own views and concerns regarding their difficult circumstances. This may mean encouraging cultural activities such as theatre, singing, festivals and exhibitions mounted by schools and youth groups. Opportunities to advocate for their own cause also may be facilitated, for example, by support to their involvement in "children's days", carnivals and sporting competitions, and by promoting children's involvement in such initiatives as "Mayors as Defenders of Children" (an international UNICEF-supported initiative) and "Teachers, Defenders of Children" (a programme in Thailand).

Advocacy

48. Advocacy has a special historical role in the area of CEDC. Media reports on and exposés of child abuse and exploitation are one means of applying the pressure required to end abuse and exploitation, influence public policy and change attitudes in the society at large. However, all advocacy must be based on research at the country or subcountry level, and it must reflect an understanding of the specific circumstances of vulnerability and hazards for children. It is inappropriate to attempt to advocate without properly researched knowledge on the children in question. All advocacy must be conducted in such a way that the situation of the children at risk is enhanced rather than further impaired. For example, ill-considered protests against child labour may lead to a situation in which children are removed from work, but thrown into far worse states of destitution. Likewise, thoughtless messages that imply connections between abusive or exploitative circumstances and particular ethnic or religious groups or persons with particular disabilities may reinforce negative stereotypes about members of those minority groups and add to their stigmatization and exclusion.

49. The development and design of programme actions should draw on the experience of ongoing efforts in many countries. For example UNICEF work on child rights in Brazil over the past 15 years provides useful lessons. Most recently, UNICEF has backed a national campaign in Brazil to address the problem of youth and child prostitution through television commercials, school-based activities and hotlines. In Rwanda, UNICEF has provided legal representation for children who are in prison on charges of genocide. In Burundi, UNICEF joined partners at an early stage of the current civil turmoil to develop a programme that would assist unaccompanied children. In Bangladesh, UNICEF and ILO, working with the Government, helped to influence the circumstances of some of the young people employed in the private sector by negotiating an agreement with the Bangladesh Garment Manufacturers and Exporters Association.

## E. Supportive actions at regional and global levels

50. Maintaining close links and improving the mechanisms that allow for collaboration with other relevant international bodies is a necessity for UNICEF. Those bodies include the Committee on the Rights of the Child; the United Nations Human Rights Commission; the United Nations Centre for Human Rights; ILO and its International Programme for the Elimination of Child Labour; UNESCO (on issues of educational deprivation and the cultural environment for the fulfilment of children's rights); UNHCR and the International Committee of the Red Cross (on issues of children affected by organized violence and forced migration); WHO (regarding the impact of specific circumstances on child health); and the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS. The list also includes the leading international NGOs within the NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child, some of which have taken a lead in developing research methodologies and advocacy approaches for certain categories of childhood disadvantage. Examples of important initiatives, among many others, are Radda Barnen's work on sexual exploitation and the work of Anti-Slavery International with child domestics. These efforts should be supported and expanded in the expectation that they will generate new types of programmatic interventions, better targeted to children and families, "significant others" such as employers, and the wider society.

51. It is not uncommon for different viewpoints on a particular circumstance to be held by countries within the same region. One country, for example, may opt for strict legal abolition of a type of child work, while another country's different socio-economic and cultural situation may lead it to favour a policy of risk reduction. Both positions may be defensible within their specific contexts. Sometimes, on particularly sensitive issues, when country-level advocacy is not possible, the issue can be raised at the regional level; for example, trafficking of girls in parts of South Asia.

52. It is necessary to have materials and information available about children in conditions of special disadvantage. However, it is critical that information, fund-raising and advocacy materials for use at the international level be fully cognizant of the diversity and complexity of country situations. International advocacy positions must not be hijacked or subverted to protect multinational industry interests, to promote a particular image for an organization or donor, or to scapegoat certain developing country Governments and cultures. Furthermore, the principle of "the best interests of the child"

should govern the elaboration of all international advocacy positions regarding children in especially difficult circumstances.

### F. Monitoring and evaluation

53. To assess the situation of children in circumstances of special disadvantage and to design programmes, both quantitative and qualitative data are necessary. Much useful data can be drawn from existing censuses and household surveys. This information can be supplemented by sample surveys and sentinel site surveys. However, bearing in mind that children and young people themselves must be a primary source, in-depth qualitative information on circumstances of disadvantage usually requires small-scale, in-depth enquiries. Effective monitoring also requires two approaches: that which measures change in the degree of disadvantage affecting children and that which assesses progress in the implementation of programmes and measures their effectiveness.

54. Some country programmes, notably in the Philippines, Thailand, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zimbabwe, have developed systems of community-level data collection and monitoring for child survival and development programmes. These systems also can be used to generate information relevant to special protection needs and measures. Participatory systems involving at-risk families and children have become much more widely used in social development planning in recent years, and they also can be an empowering experience for those involved.

55. Registration at birth that gives the child a name, identity and nationality is of vital importance for the monitoring of the situation of children in need of special protection. Proof of a child's age is vital, for example, when legal action is required in cases of child abuse, sexual exploitation, conflict with the law, under-age employment or detention in penal institutions.

56. The improvement of monitoring and evaluation at the country level can be facilitated by activity at regional and international levels. Specific actions include establishing common principles for the development of monitoring and evaluation systems; sharing information on methodological techniques; standardizing terminology; and exploring ways to cross-cut monitoring in established fields (health, education, nutrition, etc.) against monitoring in child protection areas. Work should continue with the Committee on the Rights of the Child to collaborate in the monitoring and evaluation of national efforts to protect children at special disadvantage.

## V. ORGANIZATIONAL IMPLICATIONS FOR UNICEF

57. A sense of changing priorities is reinforced by the importance now attached by UNICEF to the general protection of childhood according to principles and standards established by the Convention on the Rights of the Child, complemented by special protection measures. Children in especially difficult circumstances are among the most vulnerable, and in many of the countries now undergoing political upheaval or economic transition, they represent the majority group. This reality of the child's situation calls for multifaceted programme initiatives that address the situation holistically,

always with the goal of restoring the child's right to a more normal life, envisioned for all children by the Convention.

58. In order to put into practice the new thinking elaborated in the present policy review and the actions it should precipitate, organizational capacities and human and financial resources will have to be enhanced for the following purposes:

(a) To improve skills for analysis, for the design of appropriate programme interventions, for advocacy, and for monitoring and evaluation of child protection programmes;

(b) To develop a resource base of expertise to promote the development of legislation and the strengthening of law enforcement and judicial processes, and to enhance support for national efforts to harmonize legislation with the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

(c) To develop critically needed additional technical capacity to ensure the protection of children in emergencies, including children affected by organized violence, by outgrowths of war such as sanctions and blockades, and by circumstances that deprive them of services normally provided by state institutions.

59. Increased attention to child protection issues will require stronger organizational capacity at both regional and country levels, including the designation of focal points and additional staff. UNICEF strength in conventional programming areas provides a solid base, but many gaps remain to be filled before programming adequately addresses protection issues in every country. For industrialized countries and those that are in transition, standard programming skills may be less necessary than expertise in key advisory functions, including data collection, monitoring, institutional reform, social marketing and legislative reform.

60. The capacity to undertake the following activities should be enhanced within the organization, particularly at regional and country levels: training and orientation of staff to the especially difficult circumstance perspective and in programming and advocacy strategies; the establishment of technical teams on issues such as methodologies for research and monitoring and evaluation frameworks; the establishment of a UNICEF resource network, including key NGOs and technical experts; the promotion of inter-organizational technical support groups in key programming areas to disseminate valuable case study experience within and outside UNICEF; and the creation of an effective information network for systematic intercountry exchanges of experience and "best practice".

61. Mechanisms that exist to enable the UNICEF programme, policy and external relations functions to collaborate effectively in the area of child protection need to be strengthened further. A helpful step would be to compile an inventory of technical needs and resources with assistance from UNICEF programme and policy sections, external relations divisions, country and regional offices, and National Committees.

62. Flexibility is necessary at all levels of the organization, as is recognition that UNICEF programming and advocacy in the area of child protection are still in a stage of development.

## VI. RECOMMENDATION

63. The Executive Director recommends that the Executive Board adopt the following draft decision:

The Executive Board,

Having considered the review of UNICEF policies and strategies on child protection (E/ICEF/1996/14), 1/

1. Endorses the perspective, policies and strategies presented in the document regarding measures to protect children in circumstances of, or at risk of, gross exploitation, abuse, abandonment and other forms of special disadvantage, emphasizing that the protection measures should be implemented within the framework of the rights of children;

2. Requests the Executive Director to take the necessary steps to enhance UNICEF capacities so as to give a higher profile within UNICEF programmes to the protection of children exposed to extreme hazards and risks, as well as to strengthen UNICEF partnerships with agencies of the United Nations system, NGOs, and others who are active in issues of child protection.

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1/ The present policy review was supported by the following documents: "Overview: children in especially difficult circumstances" (E/ICEF/1986/L.6); "Children in situations of armed conflict" (E/ICEF/1986/CRP.2); "Exploitation of working children and street children" (E/ICEF/1986/CRP.3); and "Child abuse and neglect in a global perspective" (E/ICEF/1986/CRP.4).

## Annex

### THE COMMITTEE ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

1. The Committee on the Rights of the Child is the body mandated to monitor implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child at the international level, under the terms of Article 43 of the Convention. It is comprised of 10 experts, elected in their individual capacities rather than as voices of the countries of which they are citizens. Their backgrounds include such disciplines and expertise as law, medicine, politics, journalism, development assistance and social work.

2. States Parties to the Convention are obliged to submit an initial report on progress towards implementation two years after ratification and every five years thereafter, as laid down in Article 44 of the Convention. These reports are prepared according to guidelines established by the Committee in October 1991 (Convention/C/5). These cover all aspects of the situation of children in the country, including legislative and administrative measures, data, provision of services, etc. With regard to exploitation or abuse of children and other "difficult circumstances" - as expressed in the special protection provisions - the Committee describes actions taken to promote protection rights as "special protection measures". Such descriptors are open to reinterpretation; the operational and intellectual handling of the Convention are still in an experimental phase.

3. Following review of submitted reports, on which the Committee frequently seeks the views of the NGO community (via the NGO Group for the Convention on the Rights of the Child), the Committee meets with representatives of the States Parties in Geneva to discuss the report. This is followed by the preparation of Concluding Observations. Recommendations concerning special protection range from legal reform, to administrative measures, training and improved monitoring. Governments are recommended to seek support from UNICEF, the Centre for Human Rights, other donors and international NGOs in putting these recommendations into effect. The Observations also provide a framework for further research in relevant areas and can serve as an agenda for action by UNICEF and other organizations concerned with the well-being of children.

4. Additionally, the Committee holds yearly thematic discussions on priority issues with the involvement of UNICEF, other United Nations agencies and NGOs. In the past, discussions on the economic exploitation of children, children in armed conflict, the role of the family and juvenile justice have taken place with subsequent recommendations.

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Item 4 of the provisional agenda*

# PROGRESS REPORT ON FOLLOW-UP TO THE WORLD SUMMIT FOR CHILDREN

SUMMARY

This year - 1996 - is a milestone in the decade-long process of meeting the commitments and promises made at the World Summit for Children. It is marked by the Secretary-General's call for a review of progress through mid-decade since the World Summit and for a more complete assessment of achievement of the mid-decade goals.

All countries are expected to undertake a review of implementation of the World Summit Declaration and Plan of Action through mid-decade. The Secretary-General wrote to all heads of State or Government in February 1996, seeking their personal leadership for the national mid-decade reviews and their support for the preparation of his own report to the General Assembly. The Secretary-General also has called upon the heads of United Nations agencies to provide well-coordinated support to programme countries for their national reviews.

The Secretary-General has asked UNICEF, as the lead agency for children, to prepare his report to the General Assembly, in close consultation with the specialized agencies and other organs of the United Nations.

* E/ICEF/1996/13.

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## I. BACKGROUND

1. The World Summit for Children, held at United Nations Headquarters on 29 and 30 September 1990, was an unprecedented gathering of world leaders. The first in a series of global conferences held in the 1990s, it adopted the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children and endorsed a detailed Plan of Action for its implementation. Both the Executive Board (E/ICEF/1991/12, decision 1991/10) and the General Assembly (resolution 45/217 of 21 November 1990) welcomed the adoption by the World Summit of the Declaration and Plan of Action and urged all States and other members of the international community to work for the achievement of the goals endorsed therein. (See annex I for a complete listing of the 27 goals endorsed by the World Summit.)

2. The development of national programmes of action (NPAs) to adapt these global goals to national realities was a driving strategy to transform promises into meaningful action. By the end of 1992, 75 countries had finalized such plans and a further 62 countries were at different stages of preparation. Many of these NPAs had established intermediate targets to be achieved by mid-decade. A detailed breakdown of this information by goal and by country was included in a report to the Executive Board in 1993 (E/ICEF/1993/12).

3. In 1992, such regional groupings as the Organization of African Unity (OAU), the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) and the Ministerial Councils of the League of Arab States adapted some of the goals to suit the realities of each region and established region-specific goals to be achieved by mid-decade. In February 1993, the UNICEF/World Health Organization (WHO) Joint Committee on Health Policy (JCHP) adopted a set of mid-decade goals, derived largely from those of OAU and SAARC. These were endorsed subsequently by the Executive Boards of WHO and UNICEF (E/ICEF/1993/14, decision 1993/16) in May 1993. Setting targets for 1995 was viewed as a strategy to energize action around interventions that might yield sustainable, visible results in the short term. (See annex II for a list of the mid-decade goals.)

## II. THE MID-DECADE REVIEW OF PROGRESS

4. Paragraph 35 (iv) of the Plan of Action requested the Secretary-General to arrange for a mid-decade review, at all appropriate levels, of the progress being made towards implementation of the commitments of the Declaration and Plan of Action. Paragraph 35 (v) of the Plan of Action requested "the governing bodies of the relevant specialized agencies and the United Nations organs to include a periodic review of implementation of the Declaration and Plan of Action at their regular sessions".

5. In his report to the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly on follow-up to the World Summit for Children, the Secretary-General suggested that the sixth anniversary of the World Summit for Children, 30 September 1996, would appear to be an appropriate moment to announce the status of progress of implementation of the Declaration and Plan of Action at mid-decade (the end of 1995) and for a more complete assessment of achievements as regards the mid-decade goals. The Secretary-General has asked UNICEF, as the lead agency

for children, to prepare his report to the General Assembly, in close consultation with the specialized agencies and other organs of the United Nations.

6. The Executive Director has submitted a detailed progress report on follow-up to the World Summit for Children to the Executive Board annually since 1991. However, the present report will be an abridged version for two major reasons. First, it is a preview of the Secretary-General's report, which will compile the reports received from Governments and United Nations agencies. The expectation of this mid-decade review has helped to promote thoughtful reviews. Second, at the time of the preparation of the present report, the results of the reviews from countries and other agencies were not yet available. The Executive Director will mention highlights, however, in her introduction of the present report to the Executive Board.

## III. THE SECRETARY-GENERAL'S REVIEW OF PROGRESS SINCE THE WORLD SUMMIT FOR CHILDREN

7. This year - 1996 - is a milestone in the decade-long process of meeting the commitments and promises made at the World Summit for Children. It is marked by the Secretary-General's call for a review of progress at mid-decade since the World Summit for Children. The Secretary-General wrote to all heads of State or Government in February 1996, seeking their personal support and leadership for the national mid-decade review. He stated that he regards "this review as a valuable opportunity to give renewed impetus and direction to the implementation of the Summit's results" and that "the review process should be a truly participatory one, and should receive attention and policy guidance at the highest level in every country". All countries, both industrialized and developing, are expected to undertake a review of progress at mid-decade on implementing the Declaration and Plan of Action. The review is expected both to take stock of progress made and to harness the lessons learned so as to guide future efforts to achieve the goals set for the year 2000 in a manner that is responsive to national realities.

8. In addition, the Secretary-General also has written to the heads of United Nations agencies, asking that they provide well-coordinated and cost-effective support to programme countries, as requested, for the process of the national mid-decade review. The Secretary-General emphasizes "that the lessons to be learned from the mid-decade review of the World Summit for Children will provide valuable insights into the way in which shared international and national goals can be transformed into concrete and sustainable action".

9. The Executive Director has written to all heads of UNICEF country and regional offices, requesting that they work closely with other members of the United Nations country team to support the process of the national mid-decade review. Any requests for support will be financed from available resources assigned for national capacity-building in the approved country programme. Efforts are under way to assess the cost to UNICEF and its country programmes of the mid-decade review exercise and, where possible, to such other partners as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Educational. Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Population

Fund (UNFPA) and WHO. As it becomes available, this information will be shared with the Executive Board every year in the report of the Executive Director, as requested by the Board in decision 1995/14 (E/ICEF/1995/9/Rev.1).

10. The World Summit for Children was the first in a series of global conferences held during the first half of the decade. The Secretary-General, in his letter to the heads of State or Government, stated that he is "concerned to ensure that the follow-up to this Summit [for Children] is effectively integrated with actions being taken to implement the recommendations of subsequent conferences convened by the United Nations to address other crucial, and closely related, global issues". The mid-decade review of the World Summit for Children provides an outstanding opportunity for national Governments and the international community to learn which strategies and interventions have worked, which have not, and why. It will help to adjust global goals to national realities, to formulate and implement sustainable strategies and to attract adequate national and external resources to implement national plans. It also should help to strengthen local action to achieve improvements for children.

## IV. THE GOALS OF THE WORLD SUMMIT FOR CHILDREN AND THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD

11. Pursuant to Executive Board decision 1989/5 (E/ICEF/1989/12) and with the encouragement of the Board, UNICEF developed a framework of goals and strategies for children based on extensive consultations with national Governments and independent experts. These ideas were presented in a report to the Board entitled "Strategies for children in the 1990s" (E/ICEF/1989/L.5). They drew from a wide range of knowledge and experience built during the 1980s, including the World Health Assembly's initiative for Health for All by the Year 2000, the Talloires Declaration of the International Task Force on Child Survival and Development, the International Drinking Water Supply and Sanitation Decade and the World Conference on Education for All then planned for Jomtien, Thailand, as well as General Assembly resolutions 42/186 of 11 December 1987 (on the environmental perspective to the year 2000 and beyond) and 42/187 of 11 December 1987 (on the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development).

12. This framework formed the foundation for the definition of goals and for the Plan of Action adopted by the World Summit for Children. The goals and strategies thus had a broad base of international ownership that had been formed by a dynamic process of consensus-building. The World Summit goals evolved with the drafting of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and world leaders attending the World Summit committed themselves to a 10-point programme "to protect the rights of children and to improve their lives".

13. The Convention on the Rights of the Child was adopted by the General Assembly on 20 November 1989 and came into force on 2 September 1990. The Convention is the first legally binding human rights instrument to come into force within one year of its adoption. Together, the global goals and strategies endorsed by the World Summit for Children and the realization of the rights outlined in the Convention became an ambitious agenda for national and

international action for children. The promises made at the World Summit have been strengthened further by the commitments made to the rights and obligations enshrined in the Convention. Increasingly, NPAs from all parts of the world reflect a growing understanding of their close linkages with the implementation of the Convention. The ratification of the Convention adds the force of law to the principle that States have an obligation to act in the best interest of children. It provides Governments and international agencies with a framework for developing policies benefiting children and a platform for advocacy that is founded on international laws.

## V. PROGRESS AT MID-DECADE

14. At the midway point since the Declaration and Plan of Action of the World Summit for Children were launched, the results of political commitments "to give every child a better future" are more and more visible, despite civil conflicts and man-made and natural disasters in many countries. By the end of 1995, over 100 developing countries, home to more than 90 per cent of children of the developing world, were making commitments to achieve variations on the goals for the year 2000 as well as some of the mid-decade goals. NPAs, in many forms and styles, speak to these commitments. This progress means that some 2.5 million fewer children will die in 1996 than in 1990.

15. Article 6 of the World Summit Declaration states that the goals will "first need to be adapted to the specific realities of each country in terms of phasing, priorities, standards and availability of resources". Paragraph 34 (i) of the Plan of Action urged all Governments to prepare an NPA to implement the commitments of the Declaration and the Plan of Action, as adapted to national realities. Some 104 countries have finalized NPAs and a further 51 countries are at different stages of completion. NPAs are being decentralized in some 50 countries, with another 26 countries planning to do so. (See annex IV for a country-by country status report).

16. Tracking change, using indicators that are understandable by all and useful for policy makers and their allies in Government and civil society, has proven to be a powerful tool for building sustainable improvements for children. Since 1992, the annual publication, The Progress of Nations, has recorded the advances and setbacks for children and women in all regions of the world. The 1995 issue confirms the trend of Governments to give greater priority to tracking progress for children. In 1995, UNICEF intensified its close collaboration with other United Nations partners, including UNESCO, UNFPA, the United Nations Statistical Office, WHO, the World Bank, the International Labour Organisation and the Committee on the Rights of the Child, to ensure that Governments receive improved support to strengthen their capacity to monitor progress for children and women towards shared goals. Over the past year, 102 countries assisted by UNICEF have undertaken intersectoral efforts to measure progress towards specific national goals through the use of surveys. However, much remains to be done in both industrialized and developing countries to put data to work for children.

17. In May 1996, JCHP will review the status of all health-related goals for the year 2000 set by the World Summit. In June 1996, UNICEF, UNDP, UNESCO,

UNFPA and the World Bank jointly will undertake a mid-decade review of the Declaration and Framework for Action of the 1990 World Conference on Education for All. The education goals of the World Summit for Children will be included in this review. The outcome of both major reviews will be reflected in the report of the Secretary-General.

18. While the Secretary-General's report will include a detailed overview of progress made towards all mid-decade goals and goals for the year 2000, a brief account of progress towards some specific goals is provided below.

19. One of the mid-decade goals was universal ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. By the end of 1995, 185 out of 193 Governments had ratified the Convention. By January 1996, 187 Governments had ratified it, covering 97 per cent of the world's children. In addition, Switzerland and the United States have signed the Convention. Cook Islands, Oman, Somalia and the United Arab Emirates have neither signed nor ratified. (See annex III for a list of countries that have ratified the Convention.)

20. In global terms, by 1995, 80 per cent immunization coverage had been achieved for all childhood vaccines, except two doses of tetanus toxoid. Some 77 countries, 57 of which are developing countries, already have reached the goal for the year 2000 of 90 per cent immunization coverage for three doses of combined diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus (DPT3) vaccine. Of 179 countries for which data are available for 1990 and 1994-1995, 108 currently have 80 per cent immunization levels for DPT3; 56 never reached the level of 80 per cent coverage; and 15 achieved it in 1990 but have since fallen back. Significant progress has been reported towards the mid-decade goals for measles control and the elimination of neonatal tetanus. As of September 1995, 123 countries had reported zero cases of polio for three consecutive years.

21. Iodine deficiency disorders (IDD) are recognized as a public health problem in at least 106 of the 120 countries with a population of over 1 million. At the end of 1995, 18 of 85 countries for which information is available were iodizing 90 per cent or more of all salt produced for human consumption, thus meeting the mid-decade goal. A further 16 countries reported iodization of 75 per cent or more of all salt, and many of the remaining 51 countries have established the infrastructure to produce iodized salt.

22. Primary school enrolment rates have improved in all regions, except in a large number of countries in sub-Saharan Africa, where some gains were lost in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Modest increases in rural water supply rates were achieved in all regions between 1990 and 1994, ranging between 2 to 5 per cent in Latin America and Africa and 25 per cent in Asia and the Pacific. Urban water supply coverage has declined by 2 per cent in Latin America and by 3 per cent in Africa. The decline in urban areas is because of the combined effect of rapid growth of marginalized urban populations and inappropriate sectoral policies, which have led to meagre investments in affordable and cost-effective services to the urban poor. Sanitation coverage decreased by 2 per cent in rural areas in all regions over the same period and by 10 per cent in urban areas in Africa and Latin America.

23. National reviews and the Secretary-General's overview are expected to provide lessons learned about not only strategies and change, but also goals that need rethinking. Reduction of maternal mortality is one area that stands out at mid-decade. The goal set by the World Summit for Children and under Health for All is to reduce maternal mortality by one half of 1990 levels by the year 2000. However, it is apparent today that: (a) there was no clear knowledge base for levels in 1990; and (b) neither the rationale for setting the goal nor the strategy to reach it was clear. It is also likely that without the dynamic of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Fourth World Conference on Women, the neglect of maternal mortality and morbidity would not have been addressed or recognized as evidence of the low status accorded to women around the world.

## VI. RECOMMENDATION

24. The Executive Director recommends that the Executive Board adopt the following draft decision:

The Executive Board

1. Urges all Governments that have not yet completed the national process of review of progress towards implementation of the Declaration and Plan of Action of the World Summit for Children to do so during 1996 and also urges all countries to develop feasible and sustainable strategies and programmes to achieve the nationally adapted goals for children for the year 2000;

2. Requests the Executive Director, in consultation with all concerned parties, to extend full support to the Secretary-General in his reporting of progress made on the Declaration and Plan of Action of the World Summit for Children to the General Assembly on 30 September 1996, and to encourage all partners to make every effort to use the lessons learned from the mid-decade review to develop strategies and actions to achieve the goals for the year 2000.

Annex I

GOALS FOR CHILDREN AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE 1990S

The following goals, endorsed by the World Summit for Children in 1990, were formulated through extensive consultation in various international forums attended by virtually all Governments, the relevant United Nations organizations including WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA, UNESCO, UNDP and the World Bank, and a large number of non-governmental organizations. These goals are recommended for implementation by all countries where they are applicable, with appropriate adaptation to the specific situation of each country in terms of phasing, standards, priorities and availability of resources and with respect for cultural, religious and social traditions. Additional goals that are particularly relevant to a country's specific situation should be added in its national plan of action. Achievement of these goals is essential for the full implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which is the ultimate objective of programmes for children and development.

I. MAJOR GOALS FOR CHILD SURVIVAL, DEVELOPMENT AND PROTECTION

(a) Between 1990 and the year 2000, reduction of infant and under-five child mortality rates by one third, or to 50 and 70 per 1,000 live births, respectively, whichever is less;

(b) Between 1990 and the year 2000, reduction of the maternal mortality rate by one half;

(c) Between 1990 and the year 2000, reduction of severe and moderate malnutrition among children under five years of age by one half;

(d) Universal access to safe drinking water and to sanitary means of excreta disposal;

(e) By the year 2000, universal access to basic education and completion of primary education by at least 80 per cent of primary school-age children;

(f) Reduction of the adult illiteracy rate (the appropriate age-group to be determined in each country) to at least one half its 1990 level, with emphasis on female literacy;

(g) Improved protection of children in especially difficult circumstances.

II. SUPPORTING/SECTORAL GOALS

(a) Women's health and education:

(i) Special attention to the health and nutrition of the female child and to pregnant and lactating women;

(ii) Access by all couples to information and services to prevent pregnancies that are too early, too closely spaced, too late or too many;

(iii) Access by all pregnant women to prenatal care, trained attendants during childbirth and referral facilities for high-risk pregnancies and obstetric emergencies;

(iv) Universal access to primary education, with special emphasis for girls, and accelerated literacy programmes for women;

(b) Nutrition:

(i) Reduction in severe as well as moderate malnutrition among children under five years of age by one half of 1990 levels;

(ii) Reduction of the rate of low birth weight (2.5 kilograms or less) to less than 10 per cent;

(iii) Reduction of iron deficiency anaemia in women by one third of 1990 levels;

(iv) Virtual elimination of IDD;

(v) Virtual elimination of vitamin A deficiency and its consequences, including blindness;

(vi) Empowerment of all women to breast-feed their children exclusively for four to six months and to continue breast-feeding, with complementary food, well into the second year; a/

(vii) Growth promotion and its regular monitoring to be institutionalized in all countries by the end of the 1990s;

(viii) Dissemination of knowledge and supporting services to increase food production to ensure household food security;

(c) Child health:

(i) Global eradication of poliomyelitis by the year 2000;

(ii) Elimination of neonatal tetanus by 1995;

(iii) Reduction by 95 per cent in measles deaths and reduction by 90 per cent of measles cases compared to pre-immunization levels by 1995, as a major step to the global eradication of measles in the longer run;

(iv) Maintenance of a high level of immunization coverage (at least 90 per cent of children under one year of age by the year 2000) against diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, measles, poliomyelitis and tuberculosis and against tetanus for women of child-bearing age;

(v) Reduction by 50 per cent in the deaths due to diarrhoea in children under the age of five years and 25 per cent reduction in the diarrhoea incidence rate;

(vi) Reduction by one third in deaths due to acute respiratory infections in children under five years of age;

(d) Water and sanitation:

(i) Universal access to safe drinking water;

(ii) Universal access to sanitary means of excreta disposal;

(iii) Elimination of dracunculiasis (guinea worm disease) by the year 2000;

(e) Basic education:

(i) Expansion of early childhood development activities, including appropriate low-cost, family- and community-based interventions;

(ii) Universal access to basic education and achievement of primary education by at least 80 per cent of primary-school-age children through formal schooling or non-formal education of comparable learning standard, with emphasis on reducing the current disparities between boys and girls;

(iii) Reduction of the adult illiteracy rate (the appropriate age group to be determined in each country) to at least one half of its 1990 level, with emphasis on female literacy;

(iv) Increased acquisition by individuals and families of the knowledge, skills and values required for better living, made available through all educational channels, including the mass media, other forms of modern and traditional communication and social action, with effectiveness measured in terms of behavioural change;

(f) Children in difficult circumstances:

Provide improved protection of children in especially difficult circumstances and tackle the root causes leading to such situations.

## Notes

a/ The 1990 Innocenti Declaration on the Protection, Promotion and Support of Breast-feeding, however, recommended up to two years of age or beyond.

## Annex II

### 1995 MID-DECADE GOALS a/

1. Elimination of immunization coverage of six antigens of the expanded programme on immunization to 80 per cent or more in all countries;

2. Elimination of neonatal tetanus;

3. Reduction of measles mortality by 95 per cent and measles morbidity by 90 per cent compared to pre-immunization levels;

4. Elimination of poliomyelitis in selected countries and regions (as a contribution towards global eradication of poliomyelitis by the year 2000);

5. Virtual elimination of vitamin A deficiency;

6. Universal iodization of salt;

7. Achievement of 80 per cent usage of oral rehydration therapy as part of the programme to control diarrhoeal diseases; b/

8. Making all hospitals and maternities "baby friendly" by ending free and low-cost supplies of infant formula and breast milk substitutes and following the 10 steps recommended by UNICEF and WHO;

9. Eradication of guinea worm disease (dracunculiasis);

10. Ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by all countries.

### PARTIAL TARGETS OF SELECTED GOALS BY 1995

1. Reduction of 1990 levels of severe and moderate malnutrition by one fifth (20 per cent) or more;

2. Strengthen basic education so as to achieve reduction by one third of the gap between the current primary school enrolment/retention rate and the year 2000 goal of reaching universal access to basic education and achievement of primary education by at least 80 per cent of school-age children and reduction of the gender gap in primary education in 1990 by one third;

3. Increase water supply and sanitation so as to narrow the gap between 1990 levels and universal access by the year 2000 of water supply by one fourth and of sanitation by one tenth.

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a/ Additional goals or higher targets may be set on a country or regional basis. Many countries with appropriate infrastructures and availability of drugs have included goals on the reduction of mortality due to ARI.

b/ In countries with appropriate infrastructures and availability of drugs, this goal may be extended to include 50 per cent of correct case management by health providers.

Annex III

STATUS OF THE CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD
AS OF 15 MARCH 1996

| STATE PARTIES TO THE CONVENTION BY RATIFICATION, ACCESSION OR SUCCESSION (187) | | | | STATES THAT HAVE SIGNED BUT NOT YET RATIFIED (2) | STATES THAT ARE NEITHER STATE PARTIES NOR HAVE SIGNED (4) |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Afghanistan | Equatorial Guinea | Malta | Sudan | Switzerland | Cook Islands |
| Albania | Eritrea | Marshall Islands | Suriname | United States of America | Oman |
| Algeria | Estonia | Mauritania | Swaziland | | Somalia |
| Andorra | Ethiopia | Mauritius | Sweden | | United Arab Emirates |
| Angola | Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) | Mexico | Syrian Arab Republic | | |
| Antigua and Barbuda | Fiji | Micronesia (Federated States of) | Tajikistan | | |
| Argentina | Finland | Monaco | Thailand | | |
| Armenia | France | Mongolia | The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia | | |
| Australia | Gabon | Morocco | Togo | | |
| Austria | Gambia | Mozambique | Tonga | | |
| Azerbaijan | Georgia | Myanmar | Trinidad and Tobago | | |
| Bahamas | Germany | Namibia | Tunisia | | |
| Bahrain | Ghana | Nauru | Turkey | | |
| Bangladesh | Greece | Nepal | Turkmenistan | | |
| Barbados | Grenada | Netherlands | Tuvalu | | |
| Belarus | Guatemala | New Zealand | Uganda | | |
| Belgium | Guinea | Nicaragua | Ukraine | | |
| Belize | Guinea-Bissau | Niger | United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland | | |
| Benin | Guyana | Nigeria | United Republic of Tanzania | | |
| Bhutan | Haiti | Niue | Uruguay | | |
| Bolivia | Holy See | Norway | Uzbekistan | | |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | Honduras | Pakistan | Vanuatu | | |
| Botswana | Hungary | Panama | Venezuela | | |
| Brazil | Iceland | Papua New Guinea | Viet Nam | | |
| Brunei Darussalam | India | Paraguay | Yemen | | |
| Bulgaria | Indonesia | Peru | Zaire | | |
| Burkina Faso | Iran (Islamic Republic of) | Philippines | Zambia | | |
| Burundi | Iraq | Poland | Zimbabwe | | |
| Cambodia | Ireland | Portugal | | | |
| Cameroon | Israel | Qatar | | | |
| Canada | Italy | Republic of Korea | | | |
| Cape Verde | Jamaica | Republic of Moldova | | | |
| Central African Republic | Japan | Republic of Palau | | | |
| Chad | Jordan | Romania | | | |
| Chile | Kazakstan | Russian Federation | | | |
| China | Kenya | Rwanda | | | |
| Colombia | Kiribati | Saint Kitts and Nevis | | | |
| Comoros | Kyrgyzstan | Saint Lucia | | | |
| Congo | Kuwait | Saint Vincent and the Grenadines | | | |
| Costa Rica | Lao People's Democratic Republic | Samoa | | | |
| Côte d'Ivoire | Latvia | San Marino | | | |
| Croatia | Lebanon | Sao Tome and and Principe | | | |
| Cuba | Lesotho | Saudi Arabia | | | |
| Cyprus | Liberia | Senegal | | | |
| Czech Republic | Libyan Arab Jamahiriya | Seychelles | | | |
| Democratic People's Republic of Korea | Liechtenstein | Sierra Leone | | | |
| Denmark | Lithuania | Singapore | | | |
| Djibouti | Luxembourg | Slovenia | | | |
| Dominica | Madagascar | Slovakia | | | |
| Dominican Republic | Malaysia | Solomon Islands | | | |
| Ecuador | Malawi | South Africa | | | |
| Egypt | Maldives | Spain | | | |
| El Salvador | Mali | Sri Lanka | | | |

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Annex IV

## STATUS OF THE WORLD SUMMIT FOR CHILDREN NATIONAL PROGRAMMES OF ACTION AS OF 15 MARCH 1996

| ASIA<br>* 2 ** 5 *** 20 | SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA<br>* 4 ** 11 *** 29 | LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN<br>* 6 ** 3 *** 23 | MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA<br>* 1 ** 2 *** 16 | INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES<br>* 2 ** 2 *** 14 |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Afghanistan | * Angola | * Antigua and Barbuda | *** Algeria | Andorra |
| *** Bangladesh | *** Benin | *** Argentina | *** Bahrain | *** Australia |
| *** Bhutan | *** Botswana | * Bahamas | Cyprus | Austria |
| Brunei Darussalam | ** Burkina Faso | *** Barbados | *** Djibouti | *** Belgium |
| Cambodia | *** Burundi | *** Belize | *** Egypt | *** Canada |
| *** China | ** Cameroon | *** Bolivia | *** Iran (Islamic Republic of) | *** Denmark |
| Cook Islands | ** Cape Verde | ** Brazil | * Iraq | *** Finland |
| *** Democratic People's Republic of Korea | *** Central African Republic | *** Chile | *** Jordan | * France |
| *** Fiji | *** Chad | *** Colombia | *** Kuwait | *** Germany |
| *** India | *** Comoros | *** Costa Rica | *** Lebanon | Greece |
| *** Indonesia | *** Congo | *** Cuba | ** Libyan Arab Jamahiriya | *** Holy See |
| * Kiribati | *** Côte d'Ivoire | ** Dominica | *** Morocco | Iceland |
| ** Lao People's Democratic Republic | ** Equatorial Guinea | *** Dominican Republic | *** Oman | Ireland |
| | * Eritrea | *** Ecuador | *** Qatar | Israel |
| | ** Ethiopia | *** El Salvador | *** Saudi Arabia | ** Italy |
| | Gabon | * Grenada | *** Sudan | *** Japan |
| *** Malaysia | *** Gambia | *** Guatemala | *** Syrian Arab Republic | Luxembourg |
| *** Maldives | *** Ghana | *** Guyana | *** Tunisia | Liechtenstein |
| *** Marshall Islands | *** Guinea | Haiti | *** United Arab Emirates | Malta |
| ** Micronesia (Federated States of) | *** Guinea-Bissau | *** Honduras | ** Yemen | Monaco |
| *** Mongolia | *** Kenya | *** Jamaica | | *** Netherlands |
| *** Myanmar | *** Lesotho | *** Mexico | | * New Zealand |
| Nauru | ** Liberia | *** Nicaragua | | *** Norway |
| *** Nepal | ** Madagascar | *** Panama | | *** Portugal |
| *** Pakistan | *** Malawi | *** Paraguay | | San Marino |
| * Papua New Guinea | *** Mali | *** Peru | | ** Spain |
| *** Philippines | *** Mauritania | * Saint Kitts and Nevis | | *** Sweden |
| *** Republic of Korea | *** Mauritius | | | Switzerland |
| Republic of Palau | *** Mozambique | ** Saint Lucia | | *** United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland |
| Samoa | *** Niger | * Saint Vincent and the Grenadines | | |
| *** Singapore | *** Nigeria | | | *** United States of America |
| ** Solomon Islands | *** Namibia | * Suriname | | |
| *** Sri Lanka | *** Rwanda | *** Trinidad and Tobago | | |
| *** Thailand | ** Sao Tome and Principe | *** Uruguay | | |
| Tonga | *** Senegal | *** Venezuela | | |
| ** Tuvalu | * Seychelles | | | |
| ** Vanuatu | ** Sierra Leone | | | |
| *** Viet Nam | Somalia | | | |
| | * South Africa | | | |
| | *** Swaziland | | | |
| | ** Togo | | | |
| | *** Uganda | | | |
| | *** United Republic of Tanzania | | | |
| | ** Zaire | | | |
| | *** Zambia | | | |
| | *** Zimbabwe | | | |

| CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE AND THE COMMONWEALTH OF INDEPENDENT STATES<br>*12 **1 *** 2 | |
|---|---|
| * Albania | Kyrgyzstan |
| * Armenia | Latvia |
| Azerbaijan | Lithuania |
| * Belarus | Poland |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | Republic of Moldova |
| * Bulgaria | *** Romania |
| * Croatia | ** Russian Federation |
| * Czech Republic | * Slovakia |
| Estonia | * Slovenia |
| * Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) | Tajikistan |
| * Georgia | *** Turkey |
| * Hungary | The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia |
| Kazakstan | Turkmenistan |
| | * Ukraine |
| | Uzbekistan |

* Preparation under way: 27 countries.

** Draft/outline received: 34 countries.

*** National programmes of action finalized: 104 countries.

National programmes of action finalized, in draft form or under preparation: 165 countries.

Note: In addition to the above, three dependent territories: British Virgin Island, Monserrat and Turks and Caicos have finalized Programmes of Action

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FOR ACTION

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Executive Board
Annual session 1996
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Item 7 of the provisional agenda*

# A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR UNICEF EMERGENCY INTERVENTIONS

* E/ICEF/1996/13.



96-11819

SUMMARY

The present report responds to Executive Board decision 1996/2 (E/ICEF/1996/12 (Part I)), adopted at the first regular session in January 1996, which requested the secretariat to present a conceptual framework, including guiding principles and methodologies, for UNICEF emergency interventions to the 1996 annual session of the Executive Board. Further operational papers will be presented to subsequent Board sessions.

Conceptual framework. The rights and well-being of the child are best assured within a stable and nurturing family environment. Armed conflicts, or emergencies that arise as a consequence of natural disaster, increase exponentially the rapidity of negative social change and disrupt or destroy the political, economic and social structures that underpin community cohesion and the capacity of families to protect and care for their children.

Family disruption and separation of children from their families make such children particularly vulnerable to abuse and exploitation. Displacement may occur, placing extraordinary pressures on family coping capacities. The death, illness or disablement of children, their traumatization, and the impairment of their cognitive and social development may result. The vulnerability of children to these outcomes can be reduced by actions which strengthen the protective role of families and communities.

UNICEF action. UNICEF seeks to facilitate and support interventions that aim not only at child survival, but also at a range of protections and developmental outcomes. The family, especially the mother, must be empowered - through direct interventions as well as through community and supportive social structures - with the knowledge, skills and resources to care for and protect the child. At all levels of society, basic principles which place value on children - on their right to life, to protection and to the resources necessary for their full recovery and continued development - are promoted and reinforced.

UNICEF emergency programme actions, therefore, are a mixture of advocacy, capacity-building and support to service provision, directed towards mothers, families, communities and the national social and economic environment. While the primary role of UNICEF is to assist government authorities in meeting their obligations to children, it also may collaborate with and through non-governmental organizations working at community and family levels for child care and protection.

## The well-being of the child

1. The well-being and rights of the child to survival, protection and development are best assured within a stable and cohesive family which has the knowledge, skills and resources necessary to care for and nurture the child's physical, cognitive, social, psychological and emotional development.

2. The best interests of the child have to be maintained in all circumstances, but especially in times of crisis precipitated by either armed conflict or natural disaster, when the well-being of the child is most acutely threatened.

## Threats to child well-being: emergencies and armed conflict

3. An emergency crisis, especially when characterized by social violence and armed conflict, accelerates the stress placed on the vulnerable child and family. When the fabric of society and governance is disrupted or completely shattered, positive social norms and values are eroded, social networks break down, and access to essential social services and economic resources is lost. The family is often left to cope for itself, frequently unable to provide adequate care or protection for the child.

4. Displacement is particularly threatening to the child's well-being. Internally displaced families are especially vulnerable. Most frequently headed by women, such families lack the resources to assure basic economic self-sufficiency as well as access to the services and protection afforded by traditional community structures.

5. Most stressful for the child is family disruption: the breakdown of family and kinship structures; the loss of the mother or other close relatives; and worst of all, separation from the family. Separation from both family and community protective systems increases the child's risk of exposure to violence, physical abuse and exploitation. Girls are at especially high risk of sexual abuse, and boys are at risk of enforced participation in violence and armed conflict.

6. In such circumstances, the child is exposed to a range of outcomes, including death. Surviving children face malnutrition, illness, physical and psycho-social trauma, and impaired cognitive and emotional development. These are particularly acute when essential care and protection, which could mitigate their impact, are absent and when children have been witness to, or participants in, acts of extreme violence.

7. Therefore, interventions to promote child survival are required, but they cannot be addressed in isolation. The rights and well-being of the surviving child must also be addressed through attention to its psycho-social, developmental and protection needs.

## Principles of emergency action for UNICEF

8. The guiding concepts, principles and strategies which underpin UNICEF responses in complex emergencies are outlined in the report on "UNICEF emergency services: mission and strategies" (E/ICEF/1996/4), submitted to the Executive Board at its first regular session in January 1996. Of particular note is the UNICEF commitment to:

(a) Assessing and appropriately addressing factors that affect child vulnerability before, during and after emergencies;

(b) Strengthening indigenous capacities at family, community and national levels;

(c) Ensuring a developmental orientation in its humanitarian action;

(d) Working in partnership, recognizing that the needs of children cannot be met by any one actor alone;

(e) Promoting humanitarian principles and codes of conduct.

## Implications for UNICEF action

9. UNICEF cooperation combines advocacy, capacity-building and service delivery. It supports actions which prevent or mitigate the negative impact of emergencies - of armed conflict in particular - on the child and family and which stimulate their rehabilitation and recovery. In general, support reaches women and children through national and local delivery systems and institutions. Where these are weak or non-existent, UNICEF works directly through international non-governmental implementing partners.

### The national and social fabric

10. Sovereignty, or de facto control by non-State parties, brings with it both normative and legal responsibilities to children and other victims of conflict. The primary role of UNICEF is to facilitate Governments and other authorities in fulfilling their obligations to children. It advocates compliance with the principles contained in the Convention on the Rights of the Child and other humanitarian instruments. UNICEF develops and disseminates information and education materials promoting child rights in collaboration with partner organizations.

11. UNICEF, in collaboration with other partners, helps national authorities to develop policies, standards and guidelines for programmes supporting women and children in need of special protection and care.

12. Support is extended to Governments - and, exceptionally, to other de facto authorities in conflict areas - to maintain and rehabilitate essential social services for children and women in emergencies, particularly primary health care, basic education and community water supply. UNICEF assures material, technical and financial support to national social services, but also, where urgently necessary, will directly support local or international non-governmental organizations to deliver services to populations at risk.

The community and family

13. Community and kinship structures provide families with economic support, social cohesion and protection. Such structures can be of special importance to women, many of whom are heads of household.

14. UNICEF supports civil society networks and non-governmental partners experienced in community action to promote group organization and community participation. It supports community-level action to foster the participation of women in relief and recovery programmes and gives priority to promoting access for women to essential life skills, knowledge and economic resources, all critical determinants of the well-being of the family.

15. Assistance also is extended for the re-establishment of basic services, whether by the Government or international or local organizations.

Women and children in need of special care and protection

16. While in all emergencies every child is vulnerable, those who are separated from the protective family environment require special care and protection. Among them are child soldiers, children separated from their families, children traumatized by violence, or children tortured and raped.

17. At the national level, UNICEF collaborates to develop policies and strategic guidelines. It further assists national and international partners to implement community-level programmes directed to meet the needs of these children, to reunite them with their families and to assure appropriate counselling and care.

18. Internal displacement results in particularly acute vulnerabilities for women and children. UNICEF will support national authorities to coordinate and provide basic services for this vulnerable population. Where circumstances require, UNICEF will assume a more direct operational coordinating role.

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FOR INFORMATION

# INTERIM REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP ON DOCUMENTATION

SUMMARY

In accordance with Executive Board decision 1996/5 (E/ICEF/1996/12 (Part I)), adopted at the first regular session in January 1996, a Working Group on Documentation has been established. The present interim report on its work is being transmitted to the Executive Board and will be introduced by a representative of one of the linguistic groups.

* E/ICEF/1996/13.

## I. BACKGROUND

1. The Working Group on Documentation was formed pursuant to Executive Board decision 1996/5 of 25 January 1996. The membership of the working group is as follows:

| Country | Linguistic group |
|---|---|
| Morocco | Arabic |
| China | Chinese |
| Trinidad and Tobago | English |
| France | French |
| Spain | Spanish |
| Ukraine | Russian |

2. In addition, representatives of the Executive Board secretariats of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and of the United Nations Office of Conference and Support Services (UNOCSS) have been assigned to serve on the working group.

3. Members of the working group participated in an on-site visit to UNOCSS, including the reproduction and distribution services, and received an introductory briefing from UNOCSS. The group held four meetings between 5 March and 24 April.

## II. TOPICS DISCUSSED

4. The following topics were discussed by the working group:

(a) Length of documents;

(b) Submission of documents to UNOCSS;

(c) Electronic distribution of documentation;

(d) Possibility of processing documentation outside the United Nations Secretariat.

5. At its session on 24 April 1996, the working group formulated the following recommendations on these issues:

(a) Length of documents

(i) As is already the case with UNICEF documents, reports over five pages long (not including country programming documents) should have an executive summary;

(ii) In the case of UNDP/UNFPA, the three-page limit established in decision 94/4 should be revised, and, building on relevant UNICEF decisions, a sliding scale for the length of reports should be introduced, depending on their nature;

(iii) Statistical annexes and tables should, to the extent possible, be presented in separately issued parts of a document to expedite processing;

(iv) Addenda to a main document should be subject to the sliding scale to be established under (ii) above;

(b) Submission of documents to UNOCSS

(i) Documents should be submitted to UNOCSS 10 weeks before the start of a session in an endeavour to comply with paragraph 4 of section C of General Assembly resolution 50/206, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to ensure that documentation is available in accordance with the six-week rule for the distribution of documents, simultaneously in each of the six official languages of the United Nations. The Executive Boards may wish to bear this in mind when scheduling their sessions;

(ii) In order to assist in the processing of documentation, the submission of documents to UNOCSS should be planned so as to ensure that a heavy spate of documents is not submitted on the deadline. In collaboration with UNOCSS, a priority list of documents should be established to ensure that those requiring particularly careful scrutiny in the capitals will be distributed sufficiently in advance of the session to allow for this. Prioritization will be particularly important in the case of the country programming documents;

It is intended that these arrangements will normally obviate the need for advance copies in the original language only. However, to facilitate discussion of forthcoming issues in informal sessions in the weeks between the submission of documents to UNOCSS and their distribution to delegations, relevant documents may be informally distributed, on an exceptional basis, in advance copy in the original language. Additional or updated information submitted after the 10-week deadline that is intended for circulation at a Board session, particularly as a result of consultations between delegations and the secretariats, should be made available as brief documents, not to exceed three pages, in the three working languages;

(c) Electronic distribution of documentation. Having examined various possibilities for the electronic distribution of documentation, the working group decided that, as a principle, the simultaneous distribution of documentation in all languages must be respected. It would therefore discourage the general distribution of advance copies in electronic form (except in those special circumstances noted above). Arrangements for the electronic

distribution of documentation should be coordinated with those of UNOCSS, whose plans are to make the services currently provided by the present optical disk system available on the Internet by the last quarter of 1996;

(d) Translation and processing documentation outside the United Nations system. The working group looked at the possibilities of processing documentation externally. The costs of such a measure would be prohibitive, would have to be borne entirely by the organizations involved and would not benefit from the economies of scale that accrue to the United Nations Secretariat. In addition, the dearth of competent translators would mean that the organizations would be competing with the United Nations for the same small pool.

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